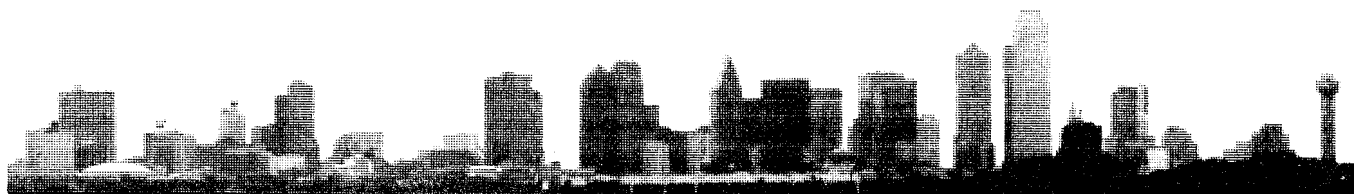


MCCC NEWS

Metroplex Commodore Computer Club



Fort Worth

Volume 11 Issue 4 — April 1993

Dallas

The Floptical Drive

review by Willie Hunt
of The Sacramento Amiga Computer Club

The Floptical disk drive from Digital Micronics, Inc. (DMI) formats a special floppy diskette to 21MB of storage space. This has been made possible by integrating traditional read/write magnetic recording and Precision Optical Tracking, thereby enabling the Floptical to have mass data storage capacities while using magnetic media. The Floptical is a removable media storage device and not a conventional hard disk drive. It has an access time of 65ms. This makes it three to five times faster than a floppy disk drive and as fast as some of the early hard drives like the Seagate St-225's that had an access time of 65 ms. The Floptical comes in two configurations: internal and external. There is also the option of a model for the A500 that includes a SCSI controller. All models come with an Insite 1325vm 3 1/2" Floptical drive, Terminators, 1 floptical diskette, and a power supply with cooling fan (external model). The internal model gets power by using a power adapter and the A500 model gets power from the A500. A neat and useful feature is a switch located in the rear of the unit which allows you to be able to change the SCSI ID number quickly and easily.

I had the external model for review. While unpacking the drive, I found that DMI had sent 3 floptical diskettes with the drive and, to my surprise, a copy of Quarterback 4.3. There was no formatting software included with the Floptical because the installation procedures are exactly the same as for any SCSI hard disk drive and the software that is provided with the host controller works just fine. I was told by DMI that the Floptical did not work with computers that had A2090 and A2090A controllers in them. My A2000 had an A2090A controller and MFM hard drive in it and I just had to see for myself if it would work or not. I found out real fast that it didn't. So, out came the A2090A and hard disk drive and I installed an A2091 and SCSI drive. When the Floptical was connected to the new controller, everything worked fine. I low-level formatted a floppy diskette and then formatted it according the instructions in the manual. The low level formatting didn't seem to make a

difference on the diskette so, on the next diskette, I skipped the low level formatting and just formatted it. To check it out, I partitioned it into two smaller partitions and proceeded to load programs onto each partition. All of the programs worked fine. I installed *Quarterback* on my hard disk and proceeded to do a backup of one of my smaller drive partitions. It was strange not to have to change the floppy every couple of minutes. The information transferred with no errors. The Floptical was also connected to the club's A500 and worked fine.

All in all, the Floptical drive is a great little mass storage device. It is not as fast as the newer hard drives but it can hold its own. If you are in the market for something that is fast and stores a large amount of data, then the Floptical isn't for you. But if you are interested in storing large amounts of data and don't have space to store large numbers of floppies, or if you make animations and want to store them somewhere other than your hard drive, then the Floptical drive is a viable choice. I would like to see the price come down a bit so that it will be more competitive with other mass storage devices that are available, but I also realize that this is a new technology and that the price will be a little high for a while. DMI has stated that they are in the process of trying to increase the storage capacity up from 20 Mb to 40 Mb.

The manual provided with the Floptical seems to be well written and has good step-by-step instructions. But it states that you have to low level format the floppy diskette. That may be incorrect because it seems to work just fine when it is just formatted normally.

Something that was not in the manual was the fact that the Floptical drives are interchangeable between all computer platforms including Amiga, IBM and compatibles, MacIntosh and Unix Work Stations. The Floptical can read 720K-1.44M MS-DOS floppies using Consultron's *CrossDOS* file system and also 800K to high-density Mac floppies with the proper drives. This makes the Floptical something to seriously consider when looking for a mass storage device. ✓

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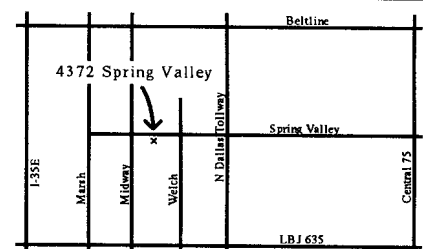
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Your Presence Is Requested At The MCCC BIRTHDAY BASH

Last Chance for Caligari 2

Back in February, Bill Raecke wrote an article announcing the MCCC 10th anniversary. To that end, we will be holding our annual picnic in a park on May 22, 1993 at the Vought Recreation Complex in Grand Prairie/Arlington.

The actual location is called Corsair Park. We have a pavillion reserved from 9:30 am to 5 pm.

There will be a cookout from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. During that time, the MCCC will supply charcoal for the barbecue grills, paper plates, cups, ice, soft drinks and maybe beer, but

that is to be decided. (Make your voice heard).

You need to bring your own meat and please bring a covered dish (potato salad, cole slaw, baked beans and the like) to share.

There are several rules that we must adhere to. No pets are allowed and no glass containers.

The map shows Corsair Park. The arrow pointing to the pavillion is where you should be.

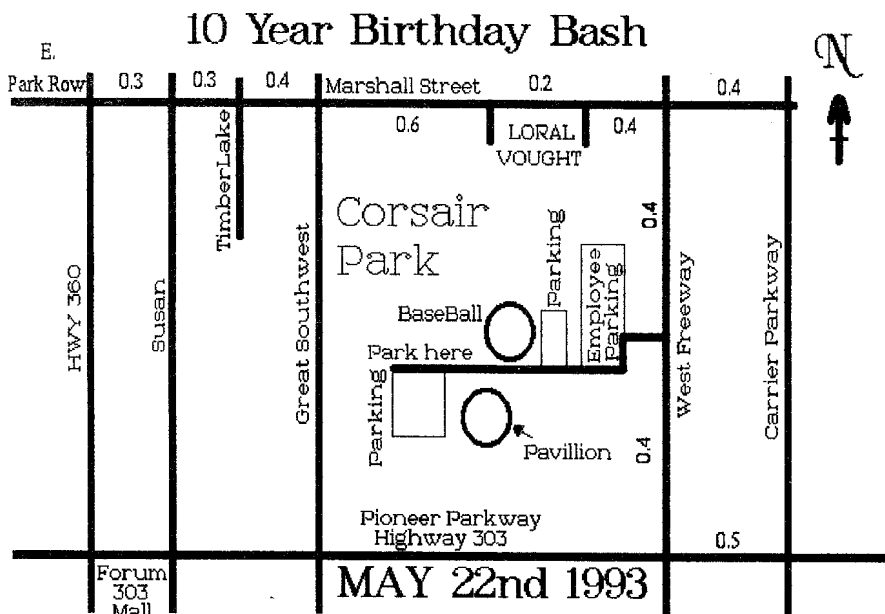
Hope to see y'all there...Pete Goad.✓

If you are a member of the BBS, you found out last month that the MCCC had an opportunity to get *Calagari 2* at a special discount rate. There wasn't much lead time and not many people had a chance to react. But now the offer has been extended. Until the end of April, MCCC members can order *Caligari 2* at the special discount price of \$92. If five or more members place an order, the price drops to \$82, and if 10 or more order, it drops again to just \$72. That's right — it could be as little as \$72 for a copy of *Caligari 2* — which normally lists for \$399.

Caligari 2, for those who don't know, is a 3D modeling, rendering and animation tool. It features an easy to use modeler using virtual reality technology for direct real-time manipulation of 3D objects in full perspective; a single point editor, full hierarchies, primitives, an extruder, mirror, slice and sweep tools; a full color renderer with texture mapping, shadows, transparency; four levels of antialiasing; an unlimited number of lights; full color HAM, HAME and DCTV output; interactive spline-based animation with real-time preview; and compatibility with *Videoscape*, *LightWave* and *Sculpt 4D* objects.

It runs on all Amigas with 2MB or more memory. Of course, an accelerator is recommended.

This is a terrific deal. If you'd like to take advantage of it, send your check in the amount of \$92, payable to MCCC, to Bill Raecke, 2614 Charolais Way, Arlington, Texas 76017. I'll place the order at the end of April. If there are enough people ordering a refund will be made after the order is placed. ✓



Amiga Library News

public domain and shareware picks
from Bill Raecke

Tracker Music

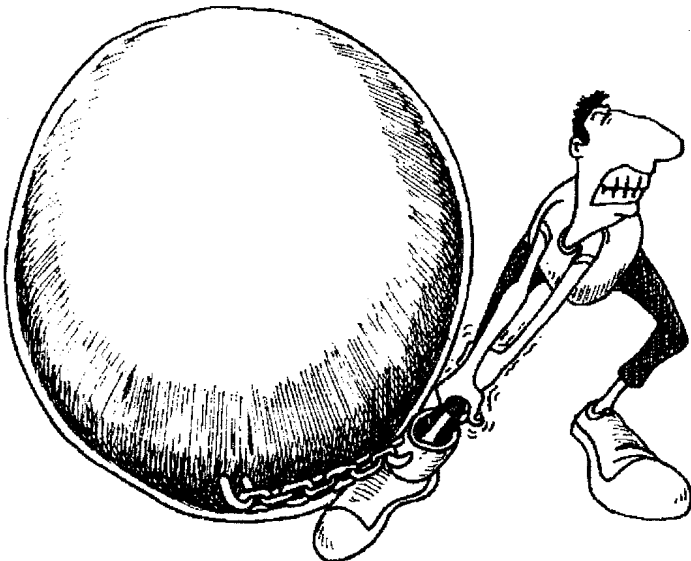
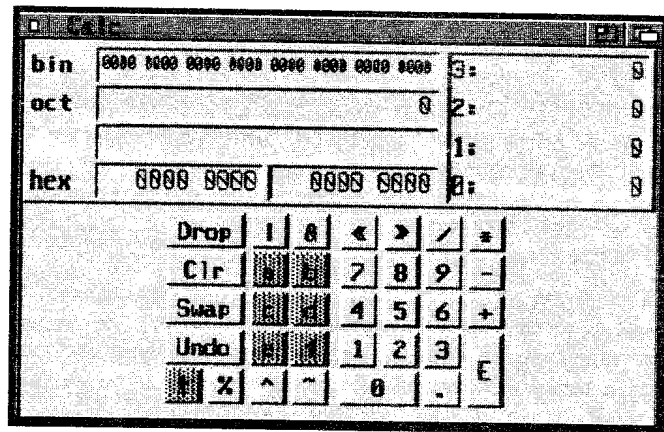
T Last month we featured music...tracker music in particular. Well, this month's selection is not nearly as large as last month's count of 34, but there is still lots of music worth adding to your collection. In all, you'll find 19 selections. My favorites are Nebulous and The Last Destiny from MCCC-A_504; Space Debris, SRL and Sad Song from MCCC-A_505; Variations from MCCC-A_506; Stray Away Child, Rainy September and Tribe of Man from MCCC-A_510; and El Gondor Pasa from MCCC-A_516.

Clipart

I suppose that if last month's big news was music, the big news for this month has to be clipart. In all there are 60 IFF clips and 23 *Adobe Illustrator* clips. On MCCC-A_506 you'll find a sports collection and a Christmas collection (it's never too soon to get ready for Christmas '93) in IFF format. There's a collection of various people and another collection of Holiday clips, again in IFF format, on MCCC-A_507. On MCCC-A_514 is a terrific clip of the New York City skyline in *Adobe Illustrator* format, and on MCCC-A_515 is a variety of additional clips in *Illustrator* format...including a set of various palm trees, a house, a tent, and lots of other neat stuff. On MCCC-A_516 are still more *Illustrator* clips including more palms, a pine tree, a train, a video camera...and more.

Sounds

There are several sound clips this month worth getting. On MCCC-A_508 is a collection that includes the famous Sam Kinison scream, the Tim Allen Grunt and a set of clips from *Wayne's World*...including my personal favorite, NOT! And the best of the month (at least so far as I am concerned) is on MCCC-A_507. It's the famous "Badges? We don't need no stinking badges!" clip from *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*. It was digitized by our own Ron May. Thanks, Ron.



Miscellaneous Good Stuff

It's a good month for some small but handy tools that may be just what you're looking for. There's a minor upgrade to *Set Buffers*...the handy utility that was featured in last month's newsletter. There's a programmer's calculator by Douglas Keller. This calculator performs only integer math, but it's unique in that it displays decimal, hexadecimal, octal and binary numbers all at once. You can make input in the base of your choice and get instant results in all four bases. Nice.

Spliner, by Tom Rokicki and Sebastiano Vigna, has been upgraded to version 37.17. A couple of new features have been added. *Spliner* still remains one of the best screen blankers available...lots more interesting than the one Commodore supplies, even with Workbench 2.1.

TrashIcon by Mark McPherson allows you to put a

Trashcan icon (you choose the design) anywhere you want on your Workbench window. The Trashcan will discard anything, from any disk. Whatever you drop in it goes away forever. You have the option of setting up a requester to confirm if you want.

Quick Grab by Steve Hines is a screen grabber. It will save any screen as an IFF file — including the new AGA display modes. It has a lot of nice touches, such as the ability to set the hot keys to whatever you want and a configurable delay that will even allow you to capture menus. It runs as a commodity and has a nice Intuition interface to allow you to modify its options whenever you need to.

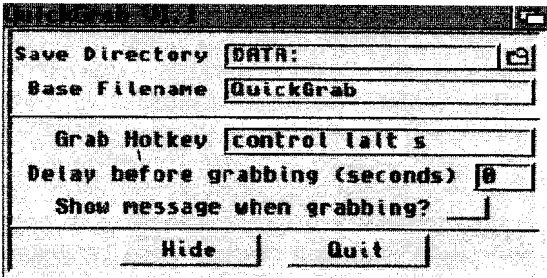
All of these handy utilities and more can be found on MCCC-A_513. Check it out.

PageStream Updates

For all you *PageStream* users, this month's disks contain some updates, not the least of which is a patch to update *PageStream* 2.21 to 2.22. You'll find this on MCCC-A_511. On MCCC-A_510 are some new import modules, including a new module to import *Final Copy II* documents and one to import graphics from Soft-Logik's own *Art Expressions* as well as some updates to some older import modules. On that same disk are some printer drivers for Hewlett Packard printers — including the DeskJet 500C and the LaserJet IV.

Quarterback Update

PageStream isn't the only package to get updated in patch fashion this month. *Quarterback* also has an update available. This patch will take you from version 5.0.3 to 5.0.4. It can be found on MCCC-A_512. ✓



CP/M Info

everything you wanted to know about CP/M — in one article
by Phil Heberer

Did you know there is a hidden manual on your C-128 CP/M distribution disk? The on-line help facility can be extracted to a text file. Here's how to go about it.

Copy HELP.HLP file to a newly formatted CP/M disk. Single drive users use

```
A>PIP E:=A:HELP.HLP <RET>.
```

Once the file is copied, at the A> prompt type
HELP[EXTRACT] <RET>.

Now to get it to the printer, type
PIP LST:=A:HELP.HLP.

I recommend renaming the file to HELP.TXT so you will know it is no longer the same file as the on-line help file. I have gone a step further and loaded the file into *WordStar 4.0* and reformatted everything nicely so each command and its instructions start on a new page. The manual is about 64 pages long, and gives quite a bit of useful info on how CP/M was implemented on the C-128.

This info is for those daring types who are not afraid to push keys. There is also an "expert" mode for changing key definitions. If you want to change a key value, simultaneously hold the Ctrl-Rt Shft-Top Left Arrow. A window will show at the bottom of the screen with the current hex value. Just type in the new value you want and hit <ret>. To change an assigned string, hit the Top Right Arrow instead. The current string assignment will show in the larger window, with the cursor blinking over the first character. Just type over the current definition and hit Ctrl-Rt Shft-Return to exit. (Just entering return adds a Ctrl M to the definition!) This is a handy feature if you are already using an application and want to assign macro commands. These changes are only temporary with the current definitions, and will stay active until you warm boot or reset the computer. A warm boot can be done by holding the Ctrl key and <Enter> (the one on the numeric keypad). This is also a good way to exit CP/M and get back to native 128 mode (If you remembered to put a different disk in the A: drive, otherwise CP/M will reboot!)

UTILITIES

If you are getting interested in the CP/M mode, I can suggest some good utilities that you should try to get. I will try to describe each as briefly as I can.

NSWP207 — *NewSweep* is a file housekeeping utility. I use it most often for transferring files from one drive to another, since it supports multi-transfers. It is also useful for showing drive space before saving a file to it. The easiest way I have found to view a doc file is to use NSWP. It is a very handy disk maintenance utility, and

can send files to either the screen or the printer, but without any formatting. You can also use the resident "type" command. At the A> prompt, just enter "type *filename*" and hit return. If you want it printed, hit a control P before entering the command, and anything typed on the screen will be sent to the printer instead. To turn off the printer, hit control P again.

ARK035 and **UNARC016** — ARK is a binary packing utility for saving disk space. Several pgms can be packed together for later retrieval with UNARC. UNARC also supports the ARC and PKD files of MS-DOS. The pgms won't work, but I've downloaded several programming tutorials intended for the PC that work the same under CP/M. Turbo Pascal and C run under CP/M or MS-DOS.

NULU151 — NULU has many similar functions to NSWP, but its primary use is to unpack .LBR files that many BBSs have for CP/M. LBR files are similar to ARKed files, but LBR is an earlier packing utility in widespread use for Kaypros and Osbornes running CP/M 2.2.

VDE266 — *Video Display Editor* is an excellent CP/M word processor that is compatible with *WordStar* files. The source codes are included with an installation utility to modify it for your own needs. The latest (and last) update to VDE is version 266. All known bugs have been corrected and a few more commands have been added to make it even more compatible with *WordStar* and *NewWord* files. A new on-line help facility is also available that makes the whole VDE manual available. Also, a new utility called CHOPVD is available that will chop large WS/NW files into VDE useable chunks. VDE is memory-resident, which makes it much faster than *WordStar* (especially with 1571/1541 drives). Look for all the above mentioned files in the MCCC 128 library files. If they are not there yet, they will be soon.

UNIDRIVE — Allows read/write capability for 20 additional disk formats in the CP/M mode. With the four formats Commodore already supports (Epson, Kaypro II, Kaypro IV, and Osborne SSDD) you should have no problem reading and/or writing any other common format. The 1571 comes in about 7 standard modes for read/write compatibility in CP/M mode. It will automatically detect which format, and query you to confirm if that is the right format with a little window that pops up in the bottom right side of the screen if it is not sure. Usually it is unsure with Kaypro format. It will usually ask you to confirm Kaypro II or Kaypro IV format. To lock it in one particular format for a session, hold the Control key when hitting return. To scroll through the different formats, use the grey up or down arrows (at the top of the keyboard). Osborne single sided double density is the

default mode. UNIDRIVE.COM adds additional formats that can be read or written to (which includes TRS-80 IV format, I think). Only ten formats can be in memory at one time, but you can run the program again and select a different ten when the need arises. (Any ten formats in any combination, I might add.)

SUPERZAP — This is an excellent disk utility much in the line of *Disk Doctor* but in CP/M mode. You can read, edit and rewrite any track and sector on the disk. The docs with it are complete and well written.

DAZZLESTAR — DZ is a superb Z80 PD disassembler! It is available as "Freeware" and is the best I have ever seen in ANY disassembler for any CPU! The docs are a bit brief, but the full manual is supposed to be available soon.

MEYER TUTORIAL — CP/M assembly language tutorial (80 pages!) Tells how to become ASM literate on a CP/M 8080 or Z80 based machine. Covers MAC.COM and SID.COM quite well. Along with DZ, you should be able to learn Z80 assembly without problem!

BRADFORD — Have you got an older dot matrix printer that doesn't have NLQ mode? If it's Epson graphics compatible, you can not only get NLQ, but also proportional printing and microjustification! There is an ARKed file called NLQ-CPM.ARK with all the files you will need. BRADFORD.COM is the one you will use most often. It gives you 12 NLQ fonts in any of 4 character sizes. In essence what it does is kick your printer into quad-density dot addressable graphics mode. As you might imagine, it prints VERY slo-o-owly in that mode, but the print quality is EXCELLENT! (Somewhat like printing with GEOS.) By looking at the samples, you should be able to figure out most of the commands. You can add the commands to text files you type in *VDE* or *WordStar*. BRADFORD.COM already recognizes WS commands by default, by the way. It is a neat file to use if you have an important letter to write and you don't want the usual draft quality of a dot matrix. Check it out — you may like it!

DOWNLOADING & USING PD SOFTWARE

There is a wealth of software available for CP/M, and most of it is public domain. It takes a little bit of practice to get the hang of it, because it's completely different than the BASIC environment we're all used to. Also, CP/M uses a different disk format, so things you download are not runnable as-is. If you have downloaded some CP/M programs from local BBSs, you will need to transfer those pgms to a CP/M formatted disk before you can use them. Before you start to transfer files, you will need several CP/M formatted disks. Boot the CP/M disk that came with your computer. On that disk is a utility called "format". When you get the A> prompt, simply type in "format" and hit return. When the program prompts you to put the disk you want formatted in the drive, do so and type the "\$" sign to begin the process. I suggest making several disks in 1571 double-sided format. You can use single-sided mode if you think

you will be reading the disks with a 1541, but that limits the storage space and the disks cannot be used as floppies. (You can't notch the disk and put things on the other side.) Once the disks are formatted, reset the computer back to 128 native mode.

Here is the procedure to get your program to a CP/M disk, but you will need to make any SEQ files into PRG files with a disk monitor. Edit the directory sectors (Track 18 on the 1541/1571 or Track 40 on the 1581) and change the "81" to "82" in the directory sectors, then resave those sectors. Then type "BLOAD filename", B1, P7168. This loads the file into RAM 1 beginning at hex \$1C00. Use the built-in ML monitor (function key F7 or type "monitor") on a blank line to get into the monitor) to look at the file and find the end. Record the hex address for the end of file. Reset the computer with a CP/M system disk in the drive to boot CP/M. (DON'T switch off. Either type "BOOT" in command mode, or push reset button!) On your system disk should be a program called "SAVE.COM". Once you are in CP/M mode, type "SAVE" at the A> prompt. When prompted for a starting address, enter 1C00. SAVE will prompt for an ending address. Use the address you wrote down earlier, plus one. This technique only works with PRG files since they can be loaded into memory. RAM bank 1 is not cleared when the computer is reset. The major problem with this is that you lose the first two bytes of the pgm, the normal load address of a real prg file. I've not had any real disasters because of that. DON'T try it on anything more than 205 disk blocks in size (about 55K). If your programs are larger than that, use a utility like *Big Blue Reader* to convert them.

Once you get the files to CP/M format, you more than likely will need to UNARC them because most of the files are crunched to save on disk space and to make sending via modem easier. All the doc files can be included with the command file. When UNARCing, make sure you have plenty of space on your disk. You can do that by using SHOW.COM on your system disk, or NSWP (my preferred method). NSWP has the "show" command built in, and can show disk space on any disk by adding the drive ID after the "S" command (i.e. s b:, or s m:, etc). After you have the files unpacked, read any "READ.ME" files or files ending in .DOC, .TXT, .NOT, or .WS. Most all of the CP/M files come with some sort of doc or txt file to explain what they're used for, and docs are almost always included in files ending in .LBR or .ARK.

There are a couple of choices for CP/M mode term programs. After playing extensively with *MEXterm* yesterday, I think there is a bug in the Xmodem checksum mode. If the last block is not exactly 128 bytes, it does not compute the correct checksum for End of File, and gives you timeout errors. I have been playing with *IMP* term today, and it works fine.

For those of you who decide to use *IMP*, there are a couple of extra utilities for use with it. *IMP-LIB.COM* allows you to change the phone library to numbers you most commonly use. It will accept up to 32 numbers, and

ATM for Windows

the best software I've never used

by Steve Jess of the Catalina Commodore Computer Club

There's a piece of software in my collection that I bought two years ago for \$60, and this month I just spent \$70 upgrading to the newest version of it. Yet in all this time, I've never used it...and I just got around to using one of the auxiliary programs that came with it this week. Still, it's one of the best buys I've ever made.

The program is *Adobe Type Manager (ATM) for Windows*. Now, my computer is an Amiga, not an IBM-compatible PC running Windows...so why would I need a Windows program? I'll get to that in a minute.

ATM is a utility that came out in 1990, when Microsoft introduced *Windows 3.0*. It lets *Windows* users use Adobe PostScript Type 1 fonts (the best kind, the kind found in PostScript laser printers that were once very expensive) with any program, and print those fonts to any printer, even a cheap dot-matrix machine. (By the way, ATM came out after *PageStream* and *Professional Page* introduced scalable fonts and jaggie-free printing on the Amiga.) Since a program like ATM is no good without fonts, several key fonts were included, such as Times, Helvetica, Courier, and Symbol. An additional \$120 buys the Adobe "Plus Pack" which rounds out the collection so that you have all the "basic 35" PostScript fonts included

with most PostScript Laser printers. To understand why this is such a great deal, you have to know how expensive Adobe fonts are when bought "ala carte." Palatino, a commonly-used text typeface that's part of the "Plus Pack" sells for \$185 *by itself*.

Here's the good part: Adobe's fonts for ATM are perfectly compatible with Amiga programs such as *PageStream* and *Post*, the public-domain PostScript interpreter. Just copy the ".AFM" (font metric) and ".PFB" (printer font-binary) files onto an Amiga disk, and install the fonts. Many can also be converted for use with *Professional Page*.

But wait, it gets better. Adobe knows its font prices are too steep for the average consumer, and the competition is getting tougher now that Microsoft is bundling its competing TrueType font system with *Windows*. So about twice a year, Adobe sends out some kind of discount font offer to registered users. Last year I got the entire "Garamond" font family — six type styles — for \$39. The latest offer was an upgrade to ATM 2.5 for \$29, with ten fonts thrown in for good measure. Another \$39 would buy 16 more new font designs. The "ala carte" price of these 26 typefaces is probably close to \$1,000, so who could resist that? ✓

CP/M — continued from Page 7

it also allows auto-redial capabilities. To use IMP-LIB, at the A> prompt, type IMP-LIB IMP.COM. (Make sure IMP.COM is on the disk you are using, since it works directly with the IMP pgm file to change the numbers.) When it asks if the library looks OK, type "Y". It will then redisplay the library with prompts at the bottom of the screen. I use the print option to make up a list for quick reference so I can remember what I assigned each of the numbers or letters to. The IMP-FUNC.DOC file has complete instructions on use of this utility also.

There is really nothing to fear with using CP/M except fear itself! There are some neat things you can do under CP/M that are difficult to do under native 128 mode. CP/M as implemented on the 128 is not very useful though unless you have at least two drives and an 80 col monitor. It is very disk intensive, and is slowed because of the serial drives that Commodore chose to use. If you have a RAM expansion (especially the 1750) it works quite well and reasonably fast. My main interest in using it is to get access to some programming languages that run under it. Namely Turbo Pascal, Fortran, and C. I am also interested in learning Z80 assembly, and there are some really excellent computer-aided tutorials available. I have learned an awful lot about how my c-128 functions by playing with CP/M. Give it a try — you may like it!! ✓

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(214) 702-9119

Tool Manager

a short tutorial for setting up

by Jim Johnson of the Metro Amiga Computer Resource

ToolManager 2.0 allows you to have:

- Programs activated by keyboard commands.
- Programs just activated by a pull down menu.
- Programs just activated by a Dock.
- Programs just activated by an Icon residing on the WB screen.

I found *ToolManager 2.0* to be powerful but a bit less than user friendly. For those that are having a bit of trouble getting the new program going, this tutorial may be of assistance.

Before I get too deep into this tutorial, a few definitions are in order for those of you who are not familiar with the terms Dock, Hot Key, and Icon in regards to *ToolManager*. The Dock function is a window that contains one or more icons, each representing a program. You can run a program with a single click, or you can grab a file and drop it onto an icon for that program to act upon. For example, I regularly grab text files and drop them onto my text reader's icon to read a file. Icons are similar to program icons that you "leave out" with Workbench, but these allow you to drag and drop files the same as Dock. Hot Key refers to a single or multiple keystroke that will launch a program. As an example, Left Amiga A will launch *Aladin* on my computer.

Configuration is a little complicated until you understand the concept behind *ToolManager*. *ToolManager* is an object oriented system. Each area of the program is separated into a different object list. The six Object areas in *ToolManager* are Exec, Image, Sound, Menu, Icon and Dock.

Exec contains the name and location of every file that you want to be able to launch from *ToolManager*. It may also contain the Hot Key combination you want to use to launch the program. Image contains the name and location of the every .info file or IFF file that you want to use as Icons or in Dock windows. Sound contains the name and location of sound files that you want to have played when a program is run.

Menu, Icon, and Dock are the lists that control what Exec object is listed where. You can build a menu list and control its order. You can create a group of icons to sit on your Workbench screen. And you can create a collection of Dock windows, each of them containing multiple program icons.

First, follow the quick start docs to get the program installed. Then go to your Preferences directory and run the new ToolManager Preferences. I would advise that you make this one of the first programs that you add to *ToolManager*. The main preference menu has a Test

button as well as the usual Save and Use button. The Test button is nice because it re-runs *ToolManager* with your new settings without closing the preferences window. The first area you work with is Exec. *ToolManager* wants you to build a list of executable files. The easiest way to do this is to select "New", then grab and drop a program icon into that window. You may also set the Hot Key combination that will activate this program. After everything is set, hit OK and then hit New to add another program. You do not need to worry about the order you add programs in this menu. Next, change the Object Type to Image. Again select "New" and grab and drop the icons you want to see appear in the Dock and as Workbench icons. Change Object Type to "Sound" and add in those sound files that you may want to accompany the activation of a file.

Change Object Type to "Menu". Here is where you build the pull down menu. Select new and then click on the Exec Object button and choose the program you want to activate from the menu. You can also select a sound file to accompany it. You must then change (and this is one of my gripes — this should be semi-automatic) the text string that reads "New Menu Object" to the string that you want to appear on the menu. Change Object to Icon and then, using the three available boxes, select the Exec Object, Icon Object, and Sound Object that you want to associate with the Icon. To easily place the Icon's position, toggle the "Open Position Window" and grab and move the small window called "Move Me" that appears in the top left corner to the spot that you want the icon to appear. The top edge and left edge coordinates are automatically updated. I can then drag the "pseudo icon" or "file name" to the AppIcon and let it go, and...Viola! The text reader displays the file.

I also use a "PopUp Dock" for all my favorite games. A Dock is a group of icons that you can place on the screen. Now, AmigaDOS 2.0 allows you to "leave out" the icons of a program you have on your hard drive. A Dock groups the icons automatically into a neat display. One feature that is especially nice of *ToolManager* is that you can set up your Dock to PopUp when you hit a Hot Key combination. RightAlt + Right Amiga + F is the Hot Key combination I use to bring up my favorite 15 games in a 3 x 5 array that appears centered directly under my pointer! If I click once on any of the icons in the Dock, that game is launched and the Dock disappears. It puts fun right at my fingertips! *ToolManager 2.0* will also allow you to put animated icons in your Dock, but I haven't tried this feature as of yet.

Wow! I got carried away there and now all my bytes are eaten. I guess I'll have to continue in the next installment of this series. Type to you later. ✓

IBM to Amiga Ports

are they bad software?

by Todd J. Petit of the New Orleans Commodore Klub, Amiga Group

There was a time when most Amiga games were written on the Amiga and then ported to other platforms. As the Amiga's share of the game market eroded (it now has just 6%, just behind the Mac's 8%, and IBM's — well, let's just say the IBM has a *huge* lead), this became the exception rather than the rule. Today a game is more likely to be an IBM port than an original Amiga creation — and sometimes it shows.

I am not what most people would consider a heavy games player. It has been almost two years since I bought a new game for my computer. I like strategy games for the most part and there has been a dearth of interesting games. This Christmas, however, Santa left not one, but two strategy games under the tree. Both are IBM ports, but one is far more successful than the other.

"There is very little in TLSF to tell you that it is an IBM port."

The first game is Merit Software's *Tom Landry Strategy Football*. It is football from a coach's point of view. It features a large playbook, 28 teams, on-line help, animated players that act out the plays you call, digitized referees, and an impressive stat keeping system. (The computer plays a very good game of football too.)

There is very little in TLSF to tell you that it is an IBM port. It uses the Amiga mouse well, has none of the "graphics glitches" that plague many ports, and it even multitasks nicely. You can boot from the game disks or run it from the Workbench. The graphics, while not the best I have seen in an Amiga game, are by no means the worst either. The interface consists of a host of 3D (but not Amiga style) buttons that are attractive and responsive. This game, simply put, is a port that doesn't look much like a port — and that is good.

Microprose's *Civilization*, however, is another story entirely. Let me state up front, however, that despite its problems, *none* of them are fatal flaws. It is my new favorite game. *Railroad Tycoon's* Sid Meier has put together a true epic this time, combining elements of *Sim City*, *Seven Cities of Gold* (for those of you who remember that), the ancient classic *Hammurabi* (and that), and war gaming. The manual boasts that with a world-creation facility that keeps gameplay fresh, *Civilization* may just be the last computer game you'll ever need. While I wouldn't go *that* far, I will say that *Civilization* opens up a whole new level of strategy games. Yes, it's *that* impressive.

So what is wrong with *Civilization*? Well, it's a bad Amiga port of a good IBM game. For starters, the

programmers decided to forego using Intuition, opting instead for the easier route of directly translating their custom menu and mouse routines. This wouldn't be so bad if they weren't so inferior to the Amiga's standard menus. The same holds true for the mouse control. While the mouse moves well enough, it is annoying to have to click several times on a game icon before it responds.

The programmers apparently didn't understand Amiga graphics either. While the main gameboard works well, the animation screens that pop up periodically throughout the game are simply awful. When they aren't filled with random graphic "garbage", the animated parts are pale and flicker maddeningly. The palace-building animation is perhaps the worst offender. Strictly "eye candy" as far as gameplay goes (in fact, it can be toggled off), it totally fails in that function since the graphics are so often corrupted. What is supposed to happen is that, as you progress in the game, additions are made to your palace as symbols of your rising power. What frequently occurs, however, is that when a new piece is added to your palace on the left, one of the old pieces inexplicably vanishes on the right! On the main game board (which displays a miniature of your palace), however, the missing piece is still present so you know that — logically at least — the improvement still exists.

During the climactic landing on Alpha Centauri, the animation of that achievement is marred by two strips of graphic confetti at the top and bottom of the scrolling screen. This is a real shame as this is part of your "reward" for winning the game and, otherwise, is quite nicely done. Ironically, the long game titles and credits animation (which most people will abort) works perfectly! In a second bit of irony, it lists no less than eight people under the heading of "Quality Assurance!"

I don't know if Microprose rushed *Civilization* for the Amiga onto the market too soon so that they could cash in on its IBM success or not, but it seems obvious that more play testing was necessary. But perhaps an even more ominous consideration for the Amiga owner is that the very attributes of the Amiga that make it special were ignored during the port.

Thumbs up to Merit Software for a good game and a good port to the Amiga. And to Microprose...well, *Civilization* is a helluva game.

[MCCC Editor's Note: I thought this article was interesting and informative. But I also thought that MCCC member, Kerry Batts, would be interested to know that he had developed an IBM port when he wrote Tom Landry Strategy Football on his Amiga. For other clubs who may read this, TLSF was developed on the Amiga. But I'm sure that Kerry will appreciate the good review nonetheless.] ✓

News Flash

Commodore announces the A4000-030

West Chester, PA, March 19, 1993 — Commodore Business Machines, Inc. today announced it is expanding its Advanced Graphics Architecture (AGA) product line with the addition of the new Amiga 4000-030 desktop computer. The Amiga 4000-030 is a lower cost version of the company's Amiga 4000-040 that was introduced in September 1992. The system is expected to be available at Commodore authorized resellers by the end of the month at a Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price of \$2399.00.

Like the A4000-040 and A1200, the A4000-030 contains Commodore's AGA custom co-processor chip set which enables users to display and animate graphics in multiple resolutions at up to 256,000 colors from a palette of 16.8 million. Powered by a 25MHz Motorola EC68030 processor, the new system comes standard with 2MB of chip RAM, 2 MB of fast RAM and 120MB IDE hard drive. The unit also ships with AmigaDOS Release 3, the latest version of Commodore's multitasking operating system. AmigaDOS Release 3 takes advantage of the new AGA features while maintaining backward compatibility with Amiga software not written specifically for AGA machines.

"Commodore is committed to expanding its AGA line of computers to meet the computing requirements and budgets of all multimedia users," commented Geoffrey Stilley, vice president of sales for Commodore Business Machines, Inc. "The Amiga 4000-030 is proof of this commitment. It provides users the capabilities and performance enhancements of the AGA chip set at a considerable cost savings."

Commodore Business Machines, Inc., based in West Chester, PA, is the U.S. subsidiary of Commodore International Limited. The company manufactures and markets a complete line of Amiga computers and peripherals for the business, consumer, education and government markets. The company's worldwide installed user base of Amiga computers is presently nearly four million.

Thought For The Month

*Isn't it strange that the same people who
laugh at gypsy fortune tellers take
economists seriously?*

News Flash

Commodore sends letter to new Amiga owners

Dear Valued Customer,

We appreciate your business;
We appreciate having you as a customer!

By now you should be deeply involved with using your new Amiga. As you continue to learn more about the Amiga's capabilities, Commodore wants to add a few words of personal encouragement and issue you a special challenge.

The Amiga has been acclaimed in dozens of publications as one of the very best personal computers for multimedia available. Whether you selected your Amiga for the exciting graphics, animation, and video capabilities, or for desktop publishing or business productivity, you will find it to be an extremely capable assistant.

In future correspondence Commodore will aggressively promote the Amiga Advantage. You will also be receiving information about product updates and enhancements. And as an Amiga owner, you can be eligible to take advantage of Commodore special offers.

Now for the challenge. When you have something positive to say about your Amiga, let us know about it. Don't keep it a secret.

Many of you are involved in creative applications using features that only the Amiga can provide. We want the rest of the world to discover the ease of use and the cost saving benefits of Amiga technology. Share your ideas! Share your applications with us and other Amiga users. Sharing and communicating your applications can only lead to expanded acceptance of the Amiga among people who are looking to do better with computers and who haven't yet used an Amiga.

Send all comments, questions, and applications to:

Commodore Marketing
Dept. #480
1200 Wilson Drive
West Chester, PA 19380-4251

And, while you're at it, let us know if we're performing up to your expectations. Your comments, suggestions and helpful criticisms will help guide us to make the Amiga an even better value than it already is today. Keep those cards and letters coming.

Jim Dionne
President
Commodore Business Machines, Inc.

CHAPTER NEWS

Amiga By-The-Loop

Pete Good

The Loop meeting was treated to an excellent talk by Betty Clay on CD-Roms...but I get way ahead of myself. David (now sporting only a moustache!) welcomed everybody to our March meeting and got on with the usual club business.

The announcements for this month were centered mainly around the educational courses mentioned in my report last month and prepared by Harold Williams. These classes are for ARexx and CanDo at the Arlington Convention Center. There are very few spaces left for these classes, so Harold urged anyone wishing to enroll to do it soon.

The Q & A session that followed was strange with its absence of questions! Instead, various members mentioned new upgrades and other pertinent information. For example: upgrading *DPaintIV* to *DPaint4.5* costs around \$40 and the inside front cover of the 4.0 manual. Several comments were made regarding the "bugginess" of the latest program, and that the paint program *Brilliance* is giving *DPaint* a run for its money.

Now back to the presentation for this month. As mentioned at the start of this column, we had the great pleasure of listening to Betty explain the ins and outs of CD-ROM. Not just CDTV, but external SCSI based CD-ROM units. Betty explained CD-ROM history from the early days of the audio disc including the various standards that have to be met by equipment manufacturing companies. She then went on to discuss the three software driver packages that are available for driving the external based SCSI units. One important point to remember is that you must check the software driver to make sure that it correctly supports the drive you have. Suffice to say "Check it first".

With the newer technologies appearing, it will become possible to store even more data on a CD-ROM disc. This is accomplished by increasing the speed of the disc and some other hardware tricks. The amount of information Betty gave us reflected the thorough research she did on this topic and I, for one, learned more information than I have in a long time. (Of course I also know everything anyway. NOT!) Those who were not there missed a commendable presentation. Amiga-by-the-Loop would like to extend our thanks to Betty for her excellent presentation on all aspects of CD-ROM.

Now, as premiered in last month's report...WHAT'S THE LOOP DOING NEXT MONTH SECTION?

The next Amiga By-The-Loop presentation will hopefully be a demonstration of the new AGA machines — Commodore's new A1200 and big brother A4000.

Well, that's it for this month. We hope to see you at our next meeting of the Amiga By-The-Loop.

Amiga Central

Johnny Kitchens

It's hard to believe that 25% of the chapter meetings for 1993 are over. One thing for certain...this year is flying by fast. At the Central Chapter, the actual meeting can be divided into two parts: the question and rumor part and the presentation. The questions and rumor section has, at times, dominated the meeting. It helps people with their problems and questions and if you have some, then come on out to the next meeting and get straightened out. At this meeting, such things as RAM and RAM Disk were discussed...how to set buffers, and what are those files with the .MOD extensions were all taken care of. A good description of what AppIcons are and what they

can do for you was provided. A problem with C programming was discussed and hopefully the answer was found. If you think I'm being vague on this, well I am. Hopefully I can get your curiosity up enough for you to come and see for yourself and ask your own questions. It really is worth the trip. With so many questions we were limited to only one rumor. That is what's happening at Progressive Peripherals Inc? Apparently they are going under, but it's said that they are just restructuring. After a fire destroyed their operations last year, it's been hard sailing. The first thing I noticed was the name change. They were Progressive Peripherals & Software. Somewhere along the way they've dropped the software part. Now calls to their lines don't get answered — or, if you are lucky, one of the three people supposedly left will answer. It's sad to think that they have gone. Hopefully it's just a rumor.

For our presentation of the month Jerry Hambley of Ansoft showed us the latest in morphing products. *Cimemorph* and *Morph Plus* give your average Amiga user powers beyond belief in a software form, using the Amiga's natural abilities to produce visual effects that are really an eye full. These products can distort, rearrange, and change just about any kind of image you want. One of the things that made me think was a simple animation where the seal that appears on paper money simply spun around. You had to be there to appreciate this little thing! We were given a look at *Animation Workshop*. We got a preview of V-Lab, a new graphics board that wasn't quite ready for a full presentation. Maybe in a few months we can see this. Jerry gave us some hints on new Lightwave products and Toaster releases. Finally a tape from ASDG was shown giving even more exciting views of *Morph Plus* and *Art Department*

CHAPTER NEWS

Professional updates.

I would also like to thank Ansoft once again for bringing all those books. Many members took advantage of the situation to purchase some of the latest books on the Amiga. There was one that contained many tips and secrets that were very revealing on using the Amiga more efficiently or just having more fun with it.

You should do yourself a favor and come next month, and join the fun! The presentation will be a look at *Final Copy II*. And, of course, they'll always be the questions and answers.

Amiga North Dallas Genny White

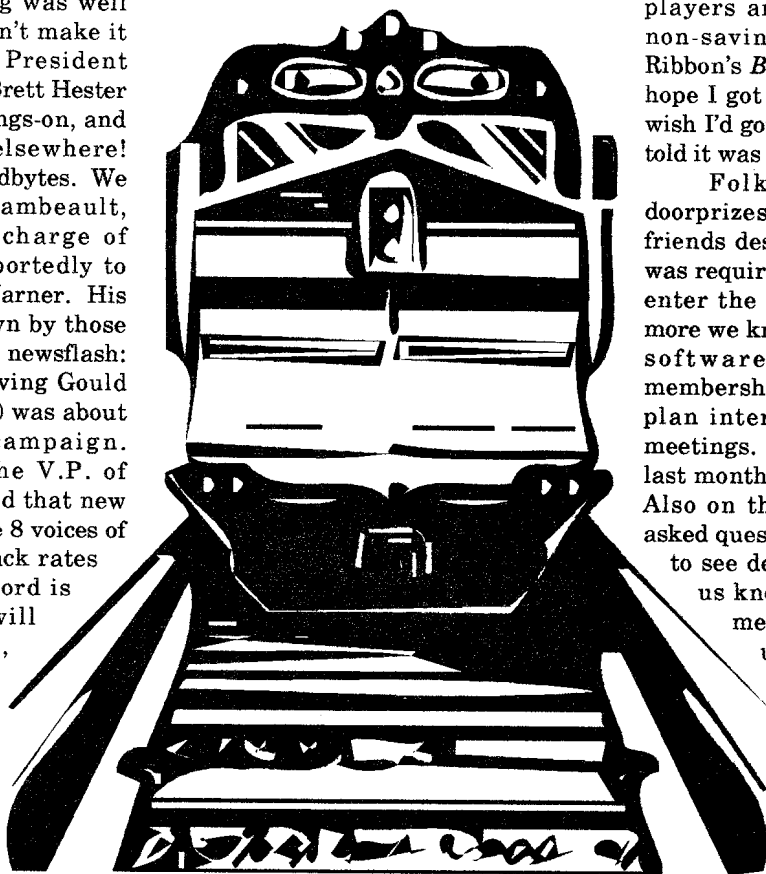
Our March meeting was well attended, I'm told: I didn't make it myself, but our trusty President Danny Barnett and V.P. Brett Hester filled me in on all the goings-on, and I'm sorry I had to be elsewhere! There were lots of news tidbytes. We heard that David Archambeault, Commodore's V.P. in charge of Marketing, has left, reportedly to accept a job with Time-Warner. His replacement was unknown by those at the meeting. A "bogus" newsflash: rumor has had it that Irving Gould (President of Commodore) was about to launch a new ad campaign. Apparently not so. The V.P. of engineering has confirmed that new Amiga machines will have 8 voices of 16-bit sound with playback rates up to 100 KHz. AND word is that the 2000 series will remain in production, especially good news for NewTek (at least until they get a Toaster working on the A4000). Other tidbytes: There's a bad version of "SnoopDOS" going around. The creator

advises that if you have the 2.0 version, delete it and re-download the "official", un-hacked 1.7 version. The manufacturers of OpalVision boards promise a driver for DOS 4.0 eventually, but not immediately. Ken Schmidt had some words to say about the *Power Packer*, *Imploder*, and *XPK* compression programs. Ned Kelly has a 2000 for sale...anybody interested? And Brett will be bringing his Self-Serve Fish Market NEXT month, for anyone who needs updates to their Fred Fish collection. It seems many have had trouble getting the updates lately, so Brett just re-purchased the CD ROM and will have current disks to #800 at the April meeting. Speaking of the April meeting, Danny Barnett

will present to us the *Virtual Reality Studio*! I will definitely have to postpone my nervous breakdown until after THAT show! Be sure to come.

Our March demo was "One Stop Music Shop", presented by David Marshall from Metropolitan. The folks at E-MU build the sound chips for their Proteus synthesizer, and now the chips are on a board to add to your 2000 or 3000 machine. Blue Ribbon Software presents a package that can tie in with your MIDI keyboard or be used alone to allow access to two 128-sample sound banks and 16 voice output. You can also use existing software such as DMCS to access the sound samples, and then redirect the output to the board or a MIDI keyboard for playing. Assorted MIDI-music players are included, including a non-saving demo version of Blue Ribbon's *Bars and Pipes* software. I hope I got this all straight, Dave — wish I'd gotten to see it all work. I'm told it was great!

Folks had to EARN their doorprizes last month...Danny and friends designed a user survey that was required (filled out, of course) to enter the doorprize drawing. The more we know about what hardware, software, interests, etc. our membership has, the better we can plan interesting and informative meetings. If you missed the survey last month, be prepared for a rerun! Also on the survey was the often asked question "What would you like to see demonstrated?" Please let us know, on the survey, at the meetings, or just call one of us up! Our oft-welcomed friend John Chang has recently moved to Washington, D.C., and I'm told is having a great time working for SCALA there! He will be much missed, but he gave US a going-



From MCCC-A 516

CHAPTER NEWS

away present: he donated some software for our doorprizes! He sent along *Fuzzy's Quest*, *Unreal* by UbiSoft, and *Nitro and Awesome* by Psygnosis. We also had some goodies from Metropolitan. Thanks and farewell, John, and thanks as always to our friends at Metropolitan (and especially Dave). See you next month!

Amiga West

Ben Clingerman

Our February meeting was the last meeting Mike Wagman (our vice president) was able to attend due to meeting time conflict and his personal schedule. So we wished him and his family well. We'll miss all of his valuable input and kind personality. John Belyeu has volunteered to replace him at the post for the remainder of his term.

In February, we learned from Eddie Monjay that Fred Fish may no longer be releasing any more Fred Fish disks due to the cost and time involved to put together the disks. At the present time he only has 40 direct subscribers (that includes the MCCC subscription) and that wasn't enough income to enable him to produce the disks. We took a donation up for him and Eddie forwarded it to him. I suggest each MCCC chapter do the same as we honestly may lose this pioneer of the Amiga PD software disk collection.

Mike Wagman was our February speaker and Mike's topic was Amiga PD utility programs. Mike told us all about PD programs XPK, EPU and Amiga E. Thanks Mike, and good luck in all you do. We will all miss you. Eddie Monjay furnished door prizes and Doug Gaudin won *VideoScape-3D*. I won *Directory OPUS*. Thanks, Mike, for the door prizes.

At the March meeting, Eddie Monjay was our featured speaker. The topic was how to animate with

Morph Plus. Eddie showed us how the manual doesn't even begin to tell how to animate. Eddie broke it down step by step and produced an animated morph of two actors from the new Star Trek - The Next Generation series...showing how to add and move points, group points, and set paths. He also showed us how to add animated effects such as ripples and such. The operating effects are ASDG effects that *Art Department Professional* uses. That's not to say that *Morph Plus* comes bundled with all of ADPro's effects, but it comes with many. If you already have ADPro, you may use all of the effects it has with *Morph Plus*. We all learned a lot about this powerful program. Thanks, Eddie, for the wonderful presentation.

April's meeting will be about word processing. I'll demo *ProWrite* and if anyone would like to show us anything about *Final Copy II* or any other such program then come on in and join the fun.

Have an Amiga day.

Arl/Grand Prairie

Brad Dumler

At the Tuesday March 9 meeting of our chapter, a small group discussed SEquential file readers and other interesting 8-bit topics. The most important thing to glean from this month's report is that the next Arlington/Grand Prairie chapter meeting will NOT be held at its usual location, the Grand Prairie Public Library. As of the submission date for this report, the location for the April meeting had not been decided. So please contact one of the chapter officers listed elsewhere in this newsletter prior to the next Tuesday night meeting for the whereabouts of the get-together. The movement of the meeting place is a temporary situation and we will try to return to the library for our May meeting. Also, there will not be a Saturday

workshop session in April, but be looking here in the newsletter next time for confirmation of the May workshop date, time, and location details. We do hope that you'll plan to attend our meetings next month.

Fort Worth

Brenda Sessums

Hello Fort Worth!

We had a new member this month — Phil Heberer (pronounced A-Bear). He told us about a BBS in Saginaw for C64s and C128s. The Saginaw BBS number is (817) 232-5075 and the SysOp is Joe Wiedimer. Call it up and say hello to Joe.

Jack Tarvin has rejoined us with a renewal and a problem everyone could sink their teeth into. He had a public domain diary program with a password on it everyone was determined to get around. Members in the group listed the program, found the password, removed it...and that's how Jack had a working diary program he could use! He is also now going to do his memoirs (we ask for 1% of gross — just kidding...).

Remember, we do have the 1992 tax program available for the C64/C128.

James Dunnam talked about printer drivers and how to print out listings to different programs. Mary Louise Hagemeyer was the guide in solving the puzzle on the diary problem and unlocking the password.

Our club president, Jo Lynn Linville, started the meeting by showing us a program called *Wheel of Fortune*. Excellent! Even Vanna is in it!

News Flash! Jo Lynn has set up a special meeting with Commodore Country reps Brad and Bobby for May 11 from 7-9 p.m. at TCOM in room 540. Be sure to mark your calendars!

Be sure to be at the meeting next month for even more fun!

The Fine Print

The Metroplex Commodore Computer Club

Statement of Purpose: The Metroplex Commodore Computer Club is a not-for-profit organization devoted to the collection and dissemination of computer knowledge, to the encouragement of computer education, and to the use of Commodore computers in the home, at school, and in business.

Legal Stuff: The MCCC is not connected with Commodore Business Machines, Inc. Commodore and Commodore product names (PET, CBM, VIC, C64, C128, and Amiga) are registered trademarks of Commodore, Inc.

Meetings and Membership: Our meetings are open to all. Family membership dues are \$24 per year or \$15 for six months, and entitle the member to a monthly mailed copy of the MCCC News, free access to the club's extensive public domain and shareware software library, and discounts at many area merchants. An additional \$12 annual fee provides access to the MCCC multi-user Bulletin Board System.

The MCCC News

Copyright Information: Material printed in the MCCC News is not copyrighted unless so noted. Articles may be reprinted or otherwise distributed by other user groups or by individuals who may find it helpful as long as proper credit is given to the author and to the MCCC.

Advertising: The MCCC News accepts two kinds of advertising. Member ads are those which are submitted by a member and which are not of a commercial nature. There is no charge for member ads. Commercial ads are those which advertise multiple like items for sale. Rates for camera-ready commercial ads are as follows for a single month or (prepaid consecutive three months): Full Page — \$36 (\$96); Half Page — \$18 (\$48); Quarter Page — \$12 (\$32); Business Card — \$6 (\$16). Materials to be inserted will cost \$.08 per copy (duplication not included) and must be inserted into all newsletters for the month.

Articles: Members are encouraged to submit articles. Articles may be submitted as ASCII text or in Amiga *excellence!*, *ProWrite*, *WordPerfect* or *Final Copy* format. They may be uploaded to the MCCC BBS, to StarText, or submitted on disk. If these methods are not possible, I will, as a last resort, accept printed articles. If graphics need to be included they may be submitted as IFF files, DR2D, *PageStream* or *Art Expressions* structured drawings, *Professional Draw* clips or, again as a last resort, printed output.

Deadline: The deadline for submissions to the MCCC News is 7am of the fourth Saturday of each month. Payment must accompany all ad copy. Make checks payable to MCCC and mail c/o Bill Raecke, 2614 Charolais Way, Arlington, Texas 76017.

Extra Copies: Extra Copies of the MCCC News are available at \$1 per copy. Orders should be forwarded with the required fee by the regular newsletter deadline.

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Normal Meeting Schedule

1st Saturday	MCCC Board of Directors
2nd Tuesday	Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
2nd Tuesday	Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter
2nd Thursday	Amiga West Chapter
2nd Saturday	Fort Worth Chapter
2nd Saturday	Arlington/Grand Prairie Workshop
3rd Wednesday	Amiga North Dallas Chapter
3rd Thursday	Amiga Central Chapter

SIGS

VidSIG	Chuck Johnson	817-478-7313
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 3 MCCC Board of Directors
10:00 am — N.Richland Hills Community Center
Loop 820 at Rufe Snow, N.Richland Hills

April 8 Amiga West Chapter
7:30 pm — Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine
Lancaster & Camp Bowie, Fort Worth

April 10 Fort Worth Chapter
1:30 pm — Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine
Lancaster & Camp Bowie, Fort Worth

April 13 Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
7:30 pm — N.Richland Hills Community Center
Loop 820 at Rufe Snow, N.Richland Hills

April 13 Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter
6:30 pm — *Check with officer for location*
This month's meeting will be at a new location

April 15 Amiga Central Chapter
7:30 pm — Arlington Community Center
2800 S. Center, Arlington

April 17 Amiga Beginner Class
10:00 am — Metropolitan Computer Products
4372 Spring Valley, Dallas

April 21 Amiga North Dallas Chapter
7:30 pm — Richardson Civic Center
411 West Arapaho, Richardson

May 1 MCCC Board of Directors
10:00 am — N.Richland Hills Community Center
Loop 820 at Rufe Snow, N.Richland Hills



May Newsletter Deadline — 7am, April 24

MCCC NEWS

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